

## Chapter Three: Appropriate Technology (AT) Component

### A. Objectives and Focus

A variety of appropriate household and farm technologies were introduced through the EMPOWER project. In Ethiopia most agricultural development activities have been directed mainly to increase productivity of crops, livestock and soil with limited attempts to develop and introduce improved tools, storage, time and labor saving technologies for food processing and storage.<sup>16</sup> Most technologies are designed outside of the communities and there is little attempt to use the knowledge of these communities or to adapt the technology to local needs and available resources. Women, in particular have been largely excluded from the selection, adaptation and introduction of appropriate technologies. The purpose of the appropriate technology (AT) component in EMPOWER was to reduce time, labor and fuel requirements so as to free up time, particularly women's, for production purposes. These technologies help farmers to increase production, reduce post-harvest loss, diversify their sources of income and improve their standards of living. The approach adopted is to identify promising technologies from research institutes and other sources and to work with farmers to adapt them to local conditions and cultural practices. To ensure sustainability, the devices use local materials and production methods. A key element of the component is to use informal dissemination techniques to ensure spillover to other families who can then benefit from the new technologies. The component focuses on both men and women, sometimes together and sometimes separately.

The key objective is to ensure sustainability and to promote replication so that the introduction of a new technology is only the first phase of the process.

### B. New Technologies Introduced by the Project

The project offered the following new technologies:



- *Improved “mirt” mud stoves:* The original Mirt Stove was a molded cement shell meant to enclose the fire, hold a single cooking pot and redirect the smoke away from the person preparing the food. Within the EMPOWER project, however, participants adapted the stove by constructing it from mud, either using molds provided by the project (south) or freehand (north). They

also usually constructed a two-vessel stove, enclosing the injera pan and making a hole available for a second cooking vessel. Some designs also included a partial

---

<sup>16</sup> End of Project Report of the EMPOWER Program, November 2003, WI, Addis Ababa.

smoke stack and place to slow-cook a dish from residual heat. All participants learned how to construct stoves in the training sessions or from other users. One of the main advantages of the stove is the fuel savings, estimated to be from 3-5 times less than required from an open fire. This reduces women's time burden for collecting fuel and also benefits the environment. A second major benefit is safety by removing the threat of an open fire from children and others.

- *Fireless cooker*: This technology is basically a “hay box,” an insulated container that traps residual heat, allowing lentils and other foods to cook slowly over a long period of time without a continuous source of heat.



- *Local shelf*: The shelf is a simple scrap-wood and mat construction that allows hearth cooking utensils, supplies or clothing to be managed more sanitarly and with less space utilization.
- *Improved grain storage*: This raised, outdoor storage container is constructed from wattle and thatch, but its unique feature is the “rat guard” metal sheathing protecting each pole. This device reduces the loss of grain to rodents and their droppings and also provides better airflow to reduce losses from

humidity. This device can increase the number of months that grain supplies will last by three or more.

- *Enset processing devices*: In the South, enset is a major food crop especially valuable in supplementing diets during the lean months. Its processing is the responsibility of women. The traditional methods of processing are tedious, time-consuming and pose serious threats to women's health, due to leg and back strain. The decorticator device introduced by the project needed to be adapted considerably to meet the women's needs, but along with a mechanical squeezer, significantly reduced the time and energy required to process enset.
- *Iceless cooler*: This simple device is basically the local shelf equipped with cloth or mat sheathing allowing water to evaporate and thus cool the interior without electricity. It was especially useful for vegetable production cooperatives. The shelf life of delicate vegetables is increased by up to three additional days.
- *Rural model house*: Each project site in the south constructed a wood saving model house to demonstrate some important health and sanitation improvements. These houses made of mud brick include labor, time and fuel saving technologies like improved mud stoves, fireless cookers, shelves, seats, beds etc. Some of the advantages of the house are the separation of cooking and sleeping areas from the main communal room, the separation of animals from the human habitat, the containment of cooking and serving utensils to improve sanitation and the reduction in logs needed in construction, thus reducing pressures on the forests.

- *Improved plow and other farm implements:* These technologies are discussed in the ON-FARM chapter.

### C. Implementation and Impacts

Of the seven household technologies demonstrated to farmers, the most widely adopted are presented in Table 3.1:

- *Mud stoves:* 712 adoptions (99% women). The feedback was generally positive and they used at least three to five times less fuel than traditional methods, a significant savings where wood is becoming increasingly scarce. Some of the complaints concerned the fact that the stove could be damaged if something dropped on it. The standard model with two cooking spaces also takes up more space. With the traditional open fire, the njera pan could be easily moved and placed against the wall when not being used, a convenience noted by some.
- *Enset decorticator:* 670 adoptions (100% women). These were only used in the South as enset is not traditionally grown in the North. The decorticator was very popular in Yem (638 adoptions) but the adoption rate was lower than expected in Gimbo, because of the relatively low enset cultivation rates in the project areas. The design was very cheap and reduced the time required for stripping the plant to one third. They also saved energy and reduced the strain on the back and legs.
- *Improved grain storage:* 572 adoptions (52% women). These were widely used by both women and men in Yem and Gimbo where they were considered to have significantly reduced grain loss to rodents, and to termites and other insects. Estimates suggest 40-60% reductions in grain losses. They also reduced the effects of humidity, thus reducing fungi problems. In combination with botanical pesticides, storage was extended for 3-6 months. In some areas the tin protectors put on the legs were difficult to obtain and families experimented with making their own cruder versions or using other options. The adoption of the grain storage was much less in the two Northern projects (only 56 adopters compared to 471 in the South). The main reason given was the high incidence of theft from outside grain storage units.
- *Fireless cookers:* 148 adoptions (98% women). This easy to build and use hay-box saved fuel by relying on residual heat. When used regularly for lentils and beans it provided an estimated savings of ½ of the daily fuel demands for cooking.



- *Iceless cooler*: 71 adoptions (64% women). About one third of the coolers were adopted by men as they were found useful for extending the shelf-life of vegetables and fruit which were being sold. It was estimated that they extended the self-life of vegetables by at least three days.
- *Local shelves*: 105 adoptions. These were quite popular as they are simple and economical to make and improved the efficiency of space utilization in the small houses in which most participants live.
- *Mud brick houses*: Although more than 1100 farmers and wereda officials in Yem and Gimbo visited the model houses, the project reports to not provide information on how many families adopted the design for their own houses. During their fieldwork, the Independent Evaluation Team visited several families who had built their own houses using a modified version of the model design. In fact some women improvised and actually built raised sleeping platforms, sofas and other conveniences into their homes. But it does not appear that the houses were widely adopted. The model house in Yem is being used by the women's vegetable production cooperative as their headquarters and thus provides continuous visibility to the principles illustrated through the house.

**Table 3.1 Numbers of Men and Women Adopting Different Appropriate Technologies**

	Mud stove	Fireless cooker	Iceless cooler	Enset decorticator (some times combined with kocho squeezer).	Improved plow	Improved grain storage	Mud brick house	Local shelves
Total	712	148	71	670	18 <sup>1</sup>	527	See note 2	105
% women	99	100	64	100	Not avail	52		100

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Information on plows is only reported for Yem and it is not clear whether they were also introduced in other projects.

<sup>2</sup> Over 1,100 farmers and wereda officials visited the model houses in Yem and Gimbo but there is no information on whether any, or how many, families built similar models.

**Source:** End of project reports for each of the four project areas. Note the figures are sometimes inconsistent with the figures given in the summary EOP report but it was assumed that the more detailed figures for each project area would be more reliable.

### C.1. Dissemination Process

A four-stage dissemination process was used. First the technology was demonstrated by the development agents and in most cases hands-on training was provided. Second, volunteers were then identified to test out the technology which was given to them free of charge or made during the training sessions. Third, the development agents maintained regular contact with the adopters and obtained feedback on any problems or suggested improvements. Fourth, adopters were encouraged to disseminate their experiences to other farmers.

Although the informal feedback was generally positive on most of the technologies introduced, the project did not carry out any systematic studies on the amount of time or energy saved so it is not possible to estimate the quantitative benefits produced by the technologies. This is unfortunate because time burdens are often one of the major

constraints on women's ability to engage in productive activities, so it would have been very useful for Winrock to have documented the time savings. It would also have been useful to have studied the utilization of the saved time, and to have checked whether in fact women were able to use this time to produce more food or to earn more income.

#### **D. Lessons Learned**

- The choice of technology has to be adapted to the specific characteristics of each project area. For example, the Enset decorticators were only used in the South, and almost 90% of the grain storage units were introduced in the two Southern projects. This makes the development, testing and diffusion more difficult and expensive as different technologies often have to be developed for each project area.
- The informal dissemination process worked well in most cases as the initial adopters were often very enthusiastic and very motivated to share their experiences with neighbors. One of the primary forums for sharing ideas was church gatherings and Peasant Association meetings.
- It is essential for the development agents to maintain close contact with adopters to provide on-the-ground training and to obtain feedback on problems or improvements.
- Adoption and dissemination worked particularly well for technologies such as the enset decorticators which were used by women working in groups.
- The appropriate technology component would have benefited from improved monitoring and evaluation. It would have been useful to have more complete information on the number of families adopting each technology as well as more feedback on the opinions of users on the strengths and weaknesses of each technology. There are also inconsistencies between the information on the number of adopters given in the summary End of Project Report and the more detailed information on the same indicators given in the End of Project Reports for each of the four project areas.
- Given that one of the principle objectives of the appropriate technology component was to reduce women's time and energy burden, it is very unfortunate that no information was collected on the (probably very significant) amount of time saved by the introduction of the enset decorticator. This omission is particularly unfortunate given the fact that women's time burden is very extensively discussed in the gender literature.

#### **E. Sustainability and Replication**

All of the technologies are designed to be locally produced and self-sustaining. In communities where a significant number of families already have experience with the technologies over a period of at least one year, most if not all should be sustainable.

While the process of dissemination and adoption is well understood by the government development agents who have worked in cooperation with Winrock, there is a danger that much of this experience will be lost due to the rapid turnover of staff. Of particular

importance is hands-on building of the devices during training, not just demonstration or informing trainees of their uses. The adoption and dissemination process is also very staff intensive, so replication will depend on the level of commitment and motivation of government agencies as well as the availability of staff.

## F. Summary

It can be concluded that the appropriate technology component of the EMPOWER project has been valuable. Although estimates of savings in time, money, energy or labor is not feasible given the data available, testimonial data suggest that the process of adapting and adopting these technologies has had subtle but pervasive impacts. Women gained confidence and esteem from the mere process of constructing their own fuel saving stoves. Male spouses commented proudly about how many neighbors came to see their stove and ask for help in construction one of their own. One DA noted that a lot of information about nutrition, child care, HIV/AIDS, family planning and harmful traditional practices was exchanged during the time women spent together constructing stoves and shelves. The opportunity to gather created a forum for education. By being a source of help to other women, volunteers grew in stature and renown, reinforcing their emerging leadership development. Thus the process of introducing and disseminating appropriate technologies created a climate to view women as innovators and contributor to not only the household, but to the community.



*The farmer in photo to the left experimented with producing his own, homemade rat guards. The production of such technologies needs to be developed as a cottage industry in rural areas.*



*The farmers above in Enebessie joined together in a savings and credit association to ensure that credit would be available to their group.*

## Chapter Four: Short-Term Training Component

### A. Objectives and Focus

The EMPOWER project was concerned with capacity building. Training was a major element in all project components. Although the EMPOWER project particularly focused on improving household food security, it did so by addressing the gender barriers to agricultural production and food management. Clearly over half of the participants in any of the agriculturally related trainings were women, nearly 80% in the income generation activities and 100% in the scholarship component. These data would suggest that EMPOWER was a gender focused project. But in reality it was a gender mainstreamed project. Male participation was widely accepted and encouraged and carefully managed to promote changes in attitudes and practices whereby creating effective working relationships among men and women to jointly address rural issues. Food insecurity is an intractable problem that needs the talents of both men and women to make inroads in reducing its devastating effects on families and communities.

The overall objective of the training component was to train men and women working at the household, wereda, zonal, regional and the federal level, often in a variety of agriculture and rural organizations, so that all stakeholders could play active roles in increasing production and productivity in the smallholder sector and insure future food security. The Training Component supported the ONFARM activities by identifying key gender barriers to agriculture productivity and offering different training programs for men and women farmers and professionals to enhance gender awareness. In assessing gender barriers to agricultural productivity, some of the constraints discovered through discussion and information gathering were:

- Low level of skills and gender awareness on the part of development agents;
- Lack of gender oriented training and training of trainers techniques;
- Lack of participatory research techniques (PRA) that focus on farmers participation;
- Low levels of awareness on the part of female farmers;
- Women at all levels are not adequately mobilized to actively participate in community affairs;
- Male farmers prefer their wives to stay in-doors;
- Lack of information on saving and credit and financial support; and
- Prevailing harmful traditional practices in communities.

The training philosophy of WI was that all training should be participatory, planned and implemented in order to meet the needs of the trainees and with the intention of putting the knowledge acquired into practical deeds. Formal follow-up was done in all cases to assess the value of the training and training methodologies, determine if changes in the training should be incorporated and provide reinforcement for continual application of the training concepts.

In addition to the extensive training provided associated with the introduction of innovations, the EMPOWER program sponsored a variety of capacity building training activities to create the following project outcomes:<sup>17</sup>

- Professionals/decision-makers engaged in gender sensitive, participatory planning and programming;
- Professionals with train-the-trainer skills to promote the transfer of information and skills;
- Trained professionals in the rural sector able to assume leadership and promote change;
- Trained female farmers able to be successful in agricultural production activities; and
- Women farmers who can assume leadership roles and participate in public affairs.

As can be noted above, these training outcomes were important and achievable. The results surpassed all expectations in the enthusiasm and commitment generated and the actions undertaken. However, considering the vast populations and concerns to be addressed, the training component can also be considered thin.

A variety of training courses were organized to promote gender understanding and attitudinal and behavior change:

- At the local level, “Gender Awareness” and “Gender/Traditional Cultural Barriers” training was organized for professionals and leaders working at the grass roots level; “Management and Leadership Training for Rural Women Leaders” was organized to mobilize capable rural women for change agent roles. Many of these same women participated in savings and credit cooperative training and other technology trainings. And a set of skill trainings in “Participatory Training Methodologies and Train-the-Trainer Techniques”, “Participatory Rural Appraisal Techniques” and “Monitoring and Evaluation” were organized for local line agency representatives to allow them to be better prepared to incorporate women in local programming.
- “Gender Assertiveness” training was organized as a workshop for the academic institutions in the SNNPRS.
- And the inspirational “Leadership for Change (LFC)” training was brought from Kenya to serve as the foundation for changing the vision and commitments of professional men and women toward more assertive actions in behalf of women. Most of the participants in this training came from regional and federal level institutions.

In this chapter, those training programs conducted in relation to gender concepts and issues for local leaders, management and leadership for rural women, gender assertiveness training for academic units and Leadership for Change (LFC) will be presented and discussed.

---

<sup>17</sup> Although data are provided for the targets and accomplishment concerning these outcomes, the system of collecting the data is unknown, therefore this evaluation will not rely on the EoP data presented.

## B. Gender Training for Local Officials and Leaders

### B.1. Gender Awareness and Gender Understanding

Since EMPOWER's inception in 1998, a series of gender awareness training programs were conducted in the Yem Special wereda and Gimbo wereda in the SNNPRS as well as Enebssie Sar Midir and Libokemkem weredas in ANRS. Those who participated in these programs were DAs, woreda agriculture office experts, other persons drawn from relevant rural organizations and a few farmers. According to the end of project reports, gender awareness or gender understanding training was extended to 214 women and men at different times and venues, the majority of the participants being women (54%).<sup>18</sup>

It is worth noting that in the traditional and patriarchal society of Ethiopia, women have been for years in a disadvantaged position, being looked down upon and considered inferior to men. Women have been subjected to all sorts of inequalities and injustices and the situation has been most evident in the rural areas, where about 85 % of the population lives. Therefore, endeavors to bring about more positive attitudes towards women, recognizing their talents and contributions and removing barriers are crucial for any social and economic development. And these training sessions reinforced these principles in practical and specific ways.



During the field visits conducted by the evaluation team, a number of local officials commented on the importance and value of these trainings. They noted that great change had occurred in their communities by bringing these subjects to the forefront and speaking out about them. Few venues exist for dialog about these sensitive issues. So the training sessions provided by WI were well received, especially by the

representatives of the Women's Affairs Units who have responsibilities in these areas. Repeatedly staff of these units noted how important these trainings were to mobilize local commitment and provide tools and strategies for local action. Not all officials however, had caught the spirit. Stories were told of resistance to the development of women's cooperatives that came from a local administrator and other concerns from the savings and credit unit head. In the north, resistance emerged through onerous interpretations of credit rules that hinder female participation in these government programs. Generally however, positive comments were received suggesting that those who attended the awareness training programs had acquired a better understanding of gender issues and were willing to both share those ideas with others and act upon them. In Gimbo wereda of the SNNPRS, a female expert at the Office of Agriculture said the following about the impact of training on herself:

---

<sup>18</sup> There are inconsistencies in the various reports; therefore these numbers must be taken at face value.

*"I had a conflict with my husband for so many years since he was dominant and abusive. I had no knowledge or the power to seek legal assistance to take him to justice. In our area, it was a taboo to level a charge against your husband, since a woman is expected to bear every act committed by the man, irrespective of its humiliating and disgusting consequences. It was after I attended the gender awareness training, that I developed the guts and confidence to take my husband to court and retained my legal rights to divorce him and secure half of the property we acquired during our marriage."*

## **B.2. Gender and Cultural Barriers**

“Gender and Traditional Cultural Barriers” training involved 99 men and women participants drawn from the project woredas of the two regions. Out of the total number of participants, 50% were females. Attendees were comprised of DAs, Peasants Associations (PAs) Officials, community leaders as well as project beneficiaries. This training differs in content from the above awareness training, as it mainly focuses on traditional and cultural barriers, which hamper women from participating in, and benefiting from full participation in society. Some of the objectives of the training are to address Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs) existing in the respective woredas, share experiences in this regard and render assistance to participants in mapping out strategies for combating the practices.

Some of the HTPs prevalent in the project areas are early marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), extraction of milk teeth of children, abduction, prohibiting girls from going to school and women to community meetings, negative funeral rituals and excessive spending on celebrations. As a result of this sensitization training, most participants actively speak out against these practices that are considered hazardous to the health and well being of society, but of women (and the girl child) in particular. HIV/AIDS, family planning and domestic violence were also noted as subjects of discussion during these training sessions and of targets for behavioral change.

Both the WI documents and the field interviews documented the strong positive reception of participants to these training sessions that galvanized consensus about the negative impacts of these gender and cultural barriers and mobilized commitment to work to change attitudes and practices. In fact many participants became enthusiastic change agents --disseminating the knowledge they acquired in the different workshops to other groups and using any forum available, such as church gatherings, traditional social institutions, PA work sites, and women's groups to promote dialogue and action. This has been confirmed by project officers and beneficiaries who noted that many families have started to abandon the harmful practices, such as early marriage, FGM, etc., and have also been motivated to send their daughters to school.

W/o Yeshiworq Tesfu, a project beneficiary of Libokemkem Woreda said the following in this connection: *“The training given by WI has enabled me to differentiate the beneficial and harmful traditional practices in my area. I am the chairperson of the local women's association in my PA and I use different forums to educate members on the*

*effects of HTPs such as early marriage and FGM. It is noticeable that many parents have started to consider doing away with the harmful practices. However, these practices could not be totally eliminated in a short period of time, since they have been with us for so many years.”* On the other hand, one woman in the community interviews in Enebossie noted that because of her persistent advocacy, 91 girls have been saved from female genital mutilation and many more female children are being sent to school in her PA!

### **B.3. Project Management Skills Training**

A variety of training courses were organized for decision-makers, planners, supervisors and development agents at the wereda and zonal levels to enhance their skills in project planning and management, especially as related to gender involvement. Trainings such as “Participatory Training Methodology/PTM-TOT”, “PRA Techniques”, and “Monitoring and Evaluation” reaching 128, 211 and 43 participants respectively. Line agency professionals in rural areas have few opportunities to receive training. Therefore the trainings offered by EMPOWER were readily received and appreciated. Not only were the skills and approaches highlighted in these trainings useful for general management purposes, they had special meaning when trying to involve a broad cross section of people in programs (including women) and when data for planning and evaluation purposes need to be disaggregated to better understand the dynamics of programs. The general “participatory” model of involving participants in all aspects of programming was not just an EMPOWER philosophy; it was adopted officially by the Offices of Agriculture and thus agency staff needed to develop skill in applying the concepts. Both training and follow-up sessions were offered on many of these skill-building topics. And because participatory methods were used in the trainings, participants became familiar and skilled in using them. An added value was the relationship building and networking that emerged as staff from partner agencies and NGOs worked together in the training sessions.

### **B.4. Management and Leadership for Rural Women Leaders**

A major contribution to the rural landscape was training in management and leadership for rural women identified as having leadership potential. Most of these women were identified while participating in other EMPOWER training activities such as savings and credit management or appropriate technology training. Across the two regions, 214 individuals participated in this training, 100% female. This training integrated various gender awareness topics along with a strong emphasis on assertiveness, public speaking and community participation.



During the training, women participated in developing skills in problem solving and seeking alternatives to overcome gender barriers. After the training, women noted their increased confidence in themselves and their ideas, their ability and willingness to speak out in public meetings and their assertiveness in questioning and challenging the status quo. Three women in Enebsie ran for and were elected to wereda council posts, many volunteered to serve on committees and some have become active promoters for various health and education campaigns. Some of these rural leaders have been assisting other women to organize to have a greater voice in local affairs or to secure services such as the legalization of women's savings and credit cooperatives in the south. Within the family, women have influenced their spouses and neighbors on the benefits of savings and participating in income generating schemes.

### **B. 5. Summary**

These various gender sensitization efforts have been incredibly successful in changing attitudes in these conservative rural communities, enabling women to participate more fully in the family and community. Not only did these changed attitudes support women farmers to have the confidence to participate in the various EMPOWER project interventions but these changes have empowered women to think of themselves differently and to take a stand on issues that affect themselves, their families and children and their communities. Furthermore, local planners and decision makers have been sensitized through training programs to review their work and to more purposefully create opportunities for female participation. A wereda council member and agriculture office expert noted, *“although promotion of gender equity/equality is a government's priority, it was only after our attendance in the WI training workshops that we gained the skills and strategies do something about gender issues in the different projects and programs we implement.”*

### **C. Gender Assertiveness in Higher Education**

The EMPOWER project also conducted a one-day gender assertiveness training workshop in Awassa College of Agriculture (ACA). The participants were comprised of 34 females and 15 males drawn from the student bodies and teaching staffs of the Debu University, ACA as well as Dilla and Wondo Genet Colleges. The main objectives of the workshop were to create a forum for encouraging female students' assertiveness in higher institutions of learning, to encourage and institutionalize gender understanding and female mentoring practices in colleges and universities, and to promote policy formulation for support to be given to female students by university and college authorities. The resulting outcomes included plans for surveying female dropouts to determine conditions leading to that decision, monitoring of male student behavior for harassment, and the creation of female student mentoring programs.

**Table 4.1. Summary of Gender and Management Training Participants (1998 to 2003)**

Type of Training	Region	No. of Trainees		Total
		Female	Male	
Gender Awareness	ANRS SNNPRS	54	56	110
		62	42	<u>104</u> 214
Gender & Cultural Barriers	ANRS SNNPRS	23	26	49
		27	23	<u>50</u> 99
Project Management Skills Training	ANRS SNNPRS	38	174	212
		53	117	<u>170</u> 382
Gender Assertiveness	SNNPRS	34	15	49
Management and Leadership	ANRS SNNPRS	102		102
		112		<u>112</u> 214

\*Source: WIE End of Project Reports, September & November 2003.

#### **D. “Leadership for Change” (LFC) Training**

The Leadership for Change training was the most impressive training provided by EMPOWER that also made the most impact. It was targeted to professional women and men drawn from the two regions, relevant federal ministries and other institutions directly impacting rural communities. The main purpose of the training was to develop a critical mass of women leaders and advocates in the agricultural sector in order to influence policies and programs that would benefit rural women farmers. A secondary goal was to organize task forces that could address issues related to women, female students and the girl child.



In the four rounds of programs conducted in Debre Zeit Management Institute and in Gonder Town, some 110 professional women and men attended the intensive training which is conducted for a period of 10-12 days. About 84.5% of the trainees were females.<sup>19</sup> As indicated in the reports, the first round of training relied on trainers recruited from the WI headquarters in the United States, Kenya and other countries. However, LFC trainees were used as trainers for later training sessions thus maintaining and expanding the capacity to replicate the training in-country. All of those selected as trainers were outstanding participants and leaders themselves. The participants of LFC training were mainly drawn from relevant sector organizations, such as agriculture, environment, education, health as well as women's affairs offices (see the following table). The program has been received with enthusiasm and both the WI documents and interviewees noted the importance of this experience in enabling participants to be more confident, aware of their talents and able to take risks.

**Table 4.2. Summary of Leadership for Change Training Participants (1999 To 2002)**

Name of organization	Educational level	Sex	
		Female	Male
Ministry of Agriculture	MSC	4	1
" "	BSC & BA	3	1
" "	DVM	1	
" "	Diploma	1	
Ministry of Education	MA	1	
" "	BA	1	

<sup>19</sup> The total number of LFC trainees does not correspond with the data contained in the end of project reports. As the result of counter checking with the WI Office, it was realized that there was a double counting of WI staff and trainers as participants of the workshops conducted.

Name of organization	Educational level	Sex	
		Female	Male
Ministry of Finance and Eco. Development	MSC	2	
" " "	BA	1	1
Ministry of Information	MA	1	
" "	BA	1	
Ministry of Trade and Industry	BA	1	
Ethiopian Environment Authority	MSC	1	
" "	BA	1	
Bekoji Agricultural College	BSC	2	
Sheno Agricultural Research Center	BSC	3	
Institute of Biodiversity	MSC	1	
National Artificial Insemination	DVM	1	
" " "	BSC	1	
Ethiopian Civil Service Commission	BA	1	
Central Statistical Authority	BA	1	
Women's Affairs Office	MA		1
" "	BA	2	
CERTWID	MA	2	
Forum of African Women Educationalist	MA	1	
" " "	BA	1	
Regional Council, ANRS	BA	1	
Women's Affairs Bureau, SNNPRS & ANRS	BSC & BA	5	2
" " "	Diploma	2	
Awassa College of Agriculture, SNNPRS	PHD		1
" " "	MA	1	
" " "	BA	1	
" " "	Diploma	1	
Bureau of Agriculture, SNNPRS & ANRS	MSC	5	
" " "	BSC	9	
" " "	Diploma	6	
Bureau of Health, SNNPRS & ANRS	Diploma	3	
" " , ANRS	BSC	1	
Bureau of Information and culture, SNNPRS	BA	1	
Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs, ANRS	BA	1	
Bureau of Planning and Eco. Deve't, SNNPRS	BA		2
Bureau of Trade and Industry, ANRS	BA	1	
Bureau of Education, SNNPRS & ANRS	BA	4	
Addis Ababa University Students	BSC	4	
USAID	MSC	1	
Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organization	MSC	1	
" " "	Diploma	3	

Name of organization	Educational level	Sex	
		Female	Male
Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Comm.	BA	1	1
Investment Office, SNNPRS	BA	1	
SARAR	BA	1	
Radio Fana	Diploma	1	
WIE Head Office	PHD	1	1
" "	MSC	1	
" "	MA		1
" "	BSC & BA		2
" "	Diploma		1
" Yem Project Officer	"		1
" ANRS Project Coord.	MSC		1
" " Training Officer	BSC	1	
		<b>93</b>	<b>17</b>

\*Source: List of Participants Submitted by WIE Training Coordinator

As shown in the table above, the majority of the LFC training participants were degree holders and most of them specialized in agriculture and related fields. Significant impacts have been reported within the individuals, their families and their organizations. Some interviewees noted that LFC was the best training that they had ever attended because it not only gave them skills to use in their work settings, but it so dramatically affected their own feelings of self that it transformed their personal values and aspirations. Others noted that the methodology used was especially appreciated. The group work and participatory methods forced individuals to stretch their thinking and skills, which resulted in increased confidence and risk-taking. As part of the commitment to this train-the-trainer program, participants are expected to share their experiences and formally incorporate elements of the training in other training forums. All reports suggest that this was enthusiastically carried out and continues as individuals are recognized for their skills and called upon from peer agencies and community organizations to provide training for others. Participants are also viewed as “experts” in leadership development and “advocates” for women, and thus are being asked to serve on critical committees and planning efforts.

A unique EMPOWER strategy was to involve as many scholarship holders as possible in the LFC. Academic training alone cannot be expected to generate leadership and risk-taking. The combination of upgraded credentials and leadership training provided a powerful boost to the confidence of these returned scholarship holders. They not only took on new responsibilities, they sought out opportunities to create change and model new behaviors. Many wanted to share their knowledge and achievements with others, but didn’t know how. The LFC training gave them tools and confidence, a peer support network and opportunities to work on projects that could make a difference in women’s lives.

One of the project ideas generated in LFC was mentoring for female high school and college students to encourage more girls to pursue careers in science. The ACA is now

viewed as being at the forefront of this movement by setting up a task force to mentor female students in the college and in a nearby high school in the town. During the field visit to Awassa, the coordinator of the task force, who is a lecturer at the college and LFC trainee, shared her experiences about the service given to female students and how important these services have been to the students.

Similarly, the task force set up in the Bekoji Agricultural College has conducted an assertiveness training for staff and students and also assessed the situation of female students in the college. The task force at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) conducted a one-day workshop on gender understanding and made a survey on gender of relevant staff. These endeavors are testaments to the commitment of the professionals who attended the LFC training to be catalysts for change.

W/o Amarech Agidew, who was a scholarship holders and LFC trainee said the following: *“Due to the interest and commitment I displayed during the training, I have been recruited to be a trainer in a workshop by WI. I have developed more confidence and become a risk taker, as the result of the training I am sharing the knowledge acquired to different groups. In light of the relevance of the subject matter, I am endeavoring to effect the integration of the LFC principles in the newly established Institute of Management Training of the SNNPRS.”*

Apart from the regular LFC training, follow up and refresher-training programs have been conducted at various venues and different times. These workshops have provided an opportunity to observe the extent of changes made in the attitudes and actions of participants, as they speak out about their experiences in sharing sessions. In general, the gender and LFC training have been critical in bringing about hope and optimism in tradition-minded agencies and programs. Participants have modeled behaviors that give confidence to others and help others become better prepared to take-on challenges. These optimistic, upwardly mobile professionals have great potential to influence change now and into the future.

## **E. Findings**

- Those trained in Leadership for Change have been become more confident and risk takers. The LFC training participants have become committed to gender issues and determined to contribute towards the improvement of the lives of poor women.
- Training in gender and cultural barriers has brought about relative attitudinal change in the project areas as manifested by support given to women by spouses and the progress being made to do away with HTPs.
- The combination of gender awareness training, management and leadership skills and participation in income generating undertakings create rural women with powerful experiences and insights to be role models and leaders in their communities.

- Gender aware planners and DAs in the project areas have been giving support to the participation of women in development endeavors and have started considering their issues in projects/programs.

## **F. Lessons Learned**

- Women professionals are able to efficiently and effectively perform many tasks, when equipped with skills and free from cultural and traditional biases/barriers.
- Asset building or economic empowerment raises the status and decision-making roles of women at the household and community levels.
- Economic incentive coupled with gender training has empowered women to be active participants in the development process.
- Gender training alone cannot bring women to the forefront to participate in development endeavors or to emancipate themselves from injustices. It takes a community working together to do so.
- The careful involvement of males can foster a supportive environment for change and empowerment of women.

## **G. Sustainability and Replicability**

- Those trained in Leadership for Change seem to honor the commitment they entered during the workshops to disseminate what they have learned and to train others in leadership skills.
- Those rural women who attended training in gender and cultural barriers and benefited from other interventions are a continuing source of training and inspiration to others in rural communities.
- Those planners and decision makers trained in gender awareness will continue to consider gender issues in the policies and programs they design.
- It is uncertain whether the enthusiasm and active dialog about gender will continue without the presence of the EMPOWER program and staff. Reinforcement is needed to support professional and lay leaders.
- The Offices of Women's Affairs have championed these gender awareness and action agendas and will be a continuing source of reinforcement, training and support. However, as staff changes emerge and individuals enter these agencies without training, it is questionable whether they can sustain these efforts.

## **H. Recommendations**

- The majority of rural women have multifaceted problems brought about by chronic poverty. Therefore, projects need to be integrated and multifaceted also, to bring about meaningful results.
- Projects to address gender need to involve both men and women, so that marginalization and restrictions by male spouses, in particular, can be minimized.
- Gender awareness training needs to be provided intensively and repeatedly so that the gender agenda can remain in the forefront of community conversation and negative attitude towards women and other deep-rooted traditional and cultural

practices affecting the health and well being of women, children and the society at large can be eliminated.



*Phase-over committee members in Enebssie.*

## Chapter Five: Scholarship Component

### A. Objectives

The intent of the scholarship component was to increase the number of women in positions of leadership in the agricultural and rural sector, especially in positions that would directly impact services to rural populations. Prior to the project inception, only 1-2% of the employees in the Bureau of Agriculture, for instance, were female. Repeatedly, the reason given for not having women in critical roles was that no female candidates were available. Thus upgrading the academic credentials and thus qualifications of women was of high priority within the project. The project was designed to provide scholarships to:

- Upgrade the skills, capabilities and credentials of women in organizations that impacted the rural sector;
- Increase the confidence and status of women so that they could influence programs and policies affecting rural women;
- Create exposure to the realities of rural life to motivate women professionals to direct their research and training to address the conditions directly affecting food security.

The project was successful in creating substantial change in the lives and futures of the women who received scholarships and who succeeded in acquiring additional educational credentials. Additionally, strong signs of changes in the attitudes and behaviors of peers and supervisors in the institutions affected provide hope that these newly trained and empowered women will have opportunities to create substantial change in the functioning of these units. Based on the information gleaned during the external review:

- Upgraded credentials created job promotions with accompanying salary increments of 50-75% (although project documents suggest even higher average increments), increased responsibility for supervision, planning and policy involvement, and increased ability to address issues affecting women and men in the rural sector.
- Increased skills, capabilities and confidence allowed these women to take on new responsibilities, assume new roles, take risks and act more assertively in dealing with people and institutional realities.
- Improved status evolved for these professional women, especially among peers and male counterparts and supervisors. Scholarship holders gained respect for their achievements, became role models for peers and even students/daughters, improved the status of their own families (education, income, role in community), and were looked upon as leaders/experts by the community.

### B. Scholarship Allocations

WI awarded 135 scholarships to Ethiopian women to upgrade their academic credentials and thus better position them for leadership positions in their organizations and in society. One hundred twenty-five (125) of these scholarships were funded by the

EMPOWER project and 6 were funded by partner programs for a total of 131. Then in 2003 (during the final year of the project) an additional 4 PhD scholarships were awarded with external funds, for a total of 135 scholarships. Of the 131 managed throughout the project period, the scholarships were awarded in the following categories:

- 3 PhD
- 10 MSc
- 62 BSc
- 40 Diploma
- 16 Certificate



### C. Implementation Strategies

Originally the project anticipated funding scholarships at the level of professional degrees (Bachelor's level and above). However, it was realized quickly after recruitment started that more women would be available for the scholarships, especially in the rural areas, by investing in lower levels of training. When the project agreements were negotiated in the Southern Region (SNNPRS) for example, a specified number of scholarships were to be allocated per wereda. Few female candidates were available at the wereda level for professional degrees, whereas many certificate holders could be upgraded to diploma status. Training at the diploma level, the qualification needed to rise in the ranks of field staff in development agencies, would fulfill a need to access women development agents in support of food security and quality of life goals. Other scholarships, at the professional level, were earmarked for mid-career women to serve specialist and management roles in select organizations at the regional and federal level.

One additional goal in the SNNPRS region was that of upgrading the diploma level training in home science available at Awassa College of Agriculture to Bachelor's status. In order to accomplish this goal, faculty with MSc and PhD degrees would be required, a reality that was not possible to achieve with existing resources. Therefore a special set of objectives within the EMPOWER project were directed at upgrading the program at Awassa, the only institution in the country providing training in areas of the family sciences and household resource management. Five scholarships were awarded to existing faculty at Awassa to provide the technical expertise needed for a full BSc curriculum. In addition, financial support was provided through the EMPOWER project to incorporate external expertise in designing the new BSc curriculum, to hire replacement faculty from India for the interim while faculty were in training, and to create a more supportive environment at the University for female student success. All of these objectives were accomplished during the project period.

## C.1. Implementation Challenges

The adjusted goals had both stunning responses and disappointing outcomes. On the positive side, a very large number of candidates applied for the scholarship training—such a large number that many candidates were turned down even though they had exceptional potential. A very stringent and objective process was undertaken in the selection process. A panel of national experts was given the responsibility of awarding the scholarships. Both the criteria used and the process undertaken was extremely thorough. None of the individuals that were interviewed questioned the objectivity of the selection process. In fact, even those who were passed over were very supportive of the process and only regretted the fact that a second wave of applications would not be forthcoming due to project termination.

However, investments in the diploma level training, proved to be unfulfilled. Thirty-one of the 40 women recruited for diploma level training failed to complete their programs (78%). This reality was very disappointing for the women themselves and for the wereda level leadership who recommended them. In looking into the situation it was found that the women recruited were just not competitive—they were older and thus less oriented toward academics, they had families and responsibilities that interfered with their studies, some experienced detractions at the campuses who which were not really prepared for non-traditional students, and in spite of heroic efforts by teachers and institutions in providing tutoring and relaxed rules, many just were not able to complete the work demanded of them. Although changes were made on the participating campuses involved during later years to create better conditions for non-traditional students, these efforts were too late for many candidates (although a few who were dismissed later returned without scholarships and were successful).

Given this realization, the project made two changes. On one hand the project invited 16 female high school graduates in the SNNPRS to undertake “certificate” level training to make them eligible for development agent positions at the wereda level. This entire batch completed their training successfully and along with the two diploma holders increased the female Development Agent contingent by 23% and 6% respectively. The second strategy was to allocate future scholarships at the regional rather than wereda level. This strategy would create a larger pool of female candidates, although it would not guarantee that any specific number of upgraded staff would be available at the wereda level. When agreements were negotiated in the north (Amhara Region) all of the scholarships were allocated at the regional level.

It also should be noted that WI exerted a great deal of time and effort to make the academic scholarship component relevant and beneficial to Ethiopia.

- The fields of study of candidates were strictly monitored to be sure that the expertise gained would be appropriate to strengthen the agricultural and rural sectors. For instance the following majors were selected: Nutritional Sciences, Food Science, Community Development, Family Resource Management, Entomology, Fisheries, Rural Development, Horticulture, General Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Dry Land

Crop Sciences, Land Management, Agricultural Economics, and Agricultural Extension.

- The majority of scholarships were awarded for in-country studies (115 out of 131). Only when necessary were out-of-country institutions considered. Also priority was given to Asian Institutions (Philippines) over Western Institutions to help insure both relevance and retention. The project was especially concerned that all scholarship holders return to Ethiopia. Many such programs have problems in this regard and the project proposal was considered risky because of this eventually. However, commitment and investment in Ethiopia were considered important selection criteria and extensive orientation to the goals of the program helped to ensure the return of candidates to their home institutions and communities. Some job turnover was expected, but so far the three organizational shifts have been within the public sector and consistent with the goals of the program.
- A strong program of monitoring and backstopping was offered to the scholarship holders. Some trainees in foreign institutions received less support, but in general candidates were in constant contact with WI staff, financial support was consistently provided on time and any problems with academic programs were quickly resolved.
- Whenever dissertations, theses or projects were required as part of the academic program, WI encouraged and even financially supported field work within projects or least on topics of interest to the EMPOWER project. All BSc candidates studying in Ethiopian Institutions were required to complete a rural work experience/project. WI funded these experiences and helped to place students in EMPOWER locations to support the ongoing agricultural and household enhancement agenda. At Alemaya University, the project actually hired a field work coordinator to support these experiences. MSc and PhD candidates were also encouraged to pursue research topics that could address issues of concern to Ethiopian development. A list of these topics provides clear evidence that important new information and innovations have been gained through these research and extension projects. (See appendix for list of titles.)
- Lastly, WI actively involved returned scholarship holders in the LFC training program. In fact, many of these individuals not only participated in the intense leadership training; they also become trainers and active promoters of such training for others. Based on WI experiences in other parts of Africa, they realized the need to build a cadre of not only qualified women, but self-confident women—women, who could take risks, face challenges and shape events. Academic training alone could not be expected to have these impacts. Thus the integration of the leadership training and scholarship program created a unique opportunity to add value and substance to these emerging leaders with the hopes of more quickly realizing results for the programs and institutions involved. This external review found ample evidence to suggest that such a combination of experiences indeed created a new milieu for action, creating confidence and commitment within the individuals involved and support within the environments in which they functioned.

## D. Outcomes and Impacts

As noted earlier, 131 scholarships were awarded during the project implementation period and four additional scholarships were awarded within the last six months. Of the 131 awarded earlier, 70% can be considered successfully completed, and 30% considered unsuccessful. In the following table, a summary of the scholarships is identified by level of training and regional association.

**Table 5.1. Scholarship Allocations and Achievements by Region**

(The numbers in parenthesis are those that failed to complete their programs.)

	Cert.	Diploma	BSc	MSc	PhD	Total Achieved	Total Drop Outs	Grand Total
SNNPRS	16	6 (19)	23 (5)	5	3	53	(24)	77
ANRS		3 (12)	29 (3)	3		35	(15)	50
Federal			2	2		4		4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9 (31)*</b>	<b>54 (8)*</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>(39)</b>	<b>131</b>

\* Note that one diploma level candidate and 2 BSc candidates were reinstated, thus reducing the drop-out rate from 30% to 27%. Also, two of the PhD candidates are also counted as recipients of MSc degrees. These data include the anticipated completion of the 13% of candidates in good standing but whose studies are still in progress.

### D.1. Summary of Outcomes

In summary, the following conclusions about outcomes and impacts can be forwarded:

- Generally, the project met or exceeded their targets for the scholarship component in all but Diploma level training. Specifically:
  - Advanced Degrees (MSc and PhD)—79% but with the 4 additional PhD's—107%
  - BSc—96%
  - Diploma—30%
  - Certificate—107%
- The project experienced higher attrition rates than expected—13% vs. 5% at professional levels and 77% vs. 10% at Diploma level.
- Professional level scholarship holders were expected to do their research or field work on topics immediately applicable to address the realities of rural conditions. This goal was met partially (89%), mostly because in some institutions the advisors directed study topics or such opportunities were not available in the foreign institutions. Topics and studies chosen were very diverse and specific and did bring attention to critical problems in the rural sector. The dissemination of the results of these studies and experiences however is limited.
- The selection of majors and institutions seem very appropriate and inline with the intent of the program.
- The project made a good decision in choosing to send candidates to in-country or Asian Institutions...thus reducing costs and providing developmentally appropriate exposure. This decision also may contribute to the 100% return rate!

6. Only three candidates to date have shifted their organizational affiliation upon return and all within the broad intents of serving rural women and addressing their needs. A concern of scholarship programs is that returned professionals will move from public sector to private sector positions or even to international agency roles, thus potentially diminishing the impact on the target goals. It is still very early to judge this phenomena in regard to EMPOWER as trainees are only now returning. In two of these cases the individuals moved from Regional level Bureau of Agriculture positions to the Federal level within the Bureau. One other MSc graduate was reassigned from the Regional Women’s Affairs unit to the Office of Civil Service Reform, mainly because of her exposure in the Philippines to a similar reform effort.
7. Seemingly 100% of candidates who returned to their former organizations received promotions or increased responsibilities commensurate with their training and on-par with male counterparts.
8. It is reasonable to assume that these women will continue to serve as leaders for women and that their increased status and credentials will continue to open doors of opportunity for them.
9. Investments in the Awassa College of Agriculture in Debub University can be considered a unique and concrete success (see success story at end of this chapter).
10. Scholarship holders returned with an unexpected benefits—access to new networks. Two of the interviews with returned scholarship holders provide examples of building and using international networks to bring new information to Ethiopian Institutions.
  - At Awassa College of Agriculture, as a result of Dr. Yewlesew Abebe’s involvements at Oklahoma State University (OSU), a new institutional linkage has been established. The president of Debub University visited OSU and a delegation of OSU faculty and administrators visited ACA to establish a series of research collaborations and faculty exchanges. Dr. Abebe herself has already secured one research grant in collaboration with her advisor at OSU and was revising a second proposal as we talked.
  - The second example also occurred in SNNPRS. An MSc scholarship holder, W/o Amarech Agidew, who attended the University of the Philippines at Los Banos, returned to her position in the Regional Women’s Affairs Office when she was asked to take-on a new role in the Office of Civil Service Reform. The Philippines had just completed a similar national civil service reform effort and it was hoped that she could use her contacts in the Philippines to access information that could help shape the Ethiopian effort. She has successfully linked these two efforts and is looked upon as an expert in this area because of these linkages.
11. Criticism was heard from within the leadership ranks of wereda officials, especially in the south, and from some development agents in that only female candidates were eligible for the scholarships. One wereda administrator called it a “lost opportunity” for his wereda in that so many of the female diploma candidates from his area failed to succeed. He interpreted this to mean that either male candidates might have been more successful, or in light of the dearth of eligible female candidates that males should have gotten the opportunity so that the wereda could benefit. This opinion that males should have been eligible may stem from the fact that few scholarships were available to anyone at the beginning of the project making these scholarships

even more coveted. WI staff commented that the eligibility criteria were reviewed when the female diploma scholarship holders ran into difficulties. But the trend in government agencies to only seek male candidates for training opportunities influenced their decision to hold firm on the female focus. Not only are males in the majority in these agencies, but because of the extreme differences in the size of the pools, males could easily out-compete female candidates. (This fact has been proven recently when a large number of scholarships have been made available to upgrade diploma holders to BSc status in the Bureau of Agriculture. No women have been selected in either the SNNPRS or ANRS.)

#### **D. Sustainability and Replicability**

The academic scholarship component of the EMPOWER project was a long-term investment in human resource development to address the shortage of trained and qualified women in leadership and management positions in the institutions serving agriculture and rural development. Throughout the world, there are gaps in the status and roles of professional women compared to men, thus limiting their ability to equally influence programs and policies. EMPOWER was a unique effort to equalize the playing field, at least to a small extent. By upgrading the academic credentials and leadership skills of 92 mid-career professional women through the scholarship component, the program has made a substantial impact on the potential of institutions to address issues relevant to rural women directly and thus through them, to the quality of rural life, including food security.

Those trained, will most certainly continue to pursue issues related to their studies and to their commitments to rural women. Already returned scholarship holders are holding more influential positions, are being invited to participate in more important policy setting forums, and are more directly responsible for the planning and implementation of programs and projects that can shape priorities and the direction of research and extension activities. These women are being viewed as experts, leaders, managers, not just employees. These women are aware of the potential that they have to make a difference in their institutions, and increasingly in their communities. This enthusiasm and optimism is real and is sustainable, especially if women can network and support each other. The mere presence of the EMPOWER program provided a visible sign of external/donor support for gender empowerment that in itself may have created support within. But with the termination of the program will this enthusiasm and optimism fade? Will termination of USAID support provide a negative signal that may be stronger than the original positive signal? The signs are unclear.

##### **D.1. The Networking and Support Potential of AWLAE**

A major element of the project's sustainability agenda was the creation of a network of professional women to provide a forum of peer support. Based on their experiences in other parts of Africa, WI hoped to establish a professional association of African Women Leaders in Agriculture and the Environment (AWLAE) to serve networking, support and

advocacy functions. The project anticipated inviting all LFC and scholarship holders to join the new association. A similar association of female lawyers has been extremely successful in mobilizing support for gender issues and in lobbying for women's rights in Ethiopia. This new association could have a similar impact on agriculture and rural development programs and policies. By organizing and creating a critical mass of voices for women in agriculture and the environment, both a support network could be created and a forum could be established for action. But this one element to sustain and capitalize on the networking needs and opportunities afforded by this dramatic increase in professional women in the agriculture and rural sector does not seem to have materialized, at least for the time being.

Much work and progress has been made in establishing the organization. An organizational structure has been created, a constitution and by-laws ratified, a managing committee elected and legal status as a domestic NGO established. All of these organizational steps were complicated, time consuming and labor and leadership intensive. But now, as the organization is critically needed to take up many of the communication and support functions that will be lost without the EMPOWER and WI infrastructure, the organization is floundering. The current president is on study leave, many of the other executive committee members have recently changed jobs, and all are extremely busy. Although feelers were sent to a variety of ministries to solicit a headquarters location, no follow-up has been done. Although a venue has been secured for an annual meeting, no committee has been formed to design the program. Operationally, the organization seems to exist in name only. In talking to some of the AWLAE leaders, they all relate the feelings of frustration in that they are committed and want the organization to succeed, yet they lack the time to make it happen. None of the trainees or returned scholarship holders with whom we interviewed had attended a meeting, although they were all aware of the organizational intents and most were members of the organization. They seemed willing to invest in such an organization, but were looking to WI for leadership. Sadly this organization might be lost due to the termination of the WI project. The organization is weak and still functioning at the organizational stage. It needs help at this critical juncture to become fully operational with enough programming momentum to sustain itself.

## **D.2. Continual Need for Resources**

It is not clear if such opportunities for upgrading women in positions in the agricultural and rural sector will continue without projects such as this. The Ethiopian Government has not earmarked scholarships for women and has not seemed to even use the affirmative action flexibility that does exist to get more females into degree programs, or into leadership positions. The Women's Affairs Offices are sorely understaffed and under funded, although they are widely viewed as advocates for women. Without external donor support, the prognosis for future scholarship programs seems poor.

Even within the donor community, such an investment in human resource development for women is rare. For USAID Ethiopia to support such an effort is commendable. An October 1999 report generated for the Royal Netherlands Embassy inventoried the

various WID/Gender activities supported by the Donor community in Ethiopia. Among the 54 organizations and agencies surveyed, including bi-lateral, multi-lateral and Donor NGOs, only USAID had made long term investments in women outside of the education sector. That investment was the EMPOWER program. This fact is gratifying but also disquieting. Why are donors not supporting capacity building for women? Why is the Ethiopian government not taking more proactive steps to upgrade and enlarge opportunities for women? These realities place the replicability of this program in question. The program has been successful, it has been effective and it has been sought after. But who will fund its continuation or replication? Even the current leadership at USAID seems indifferent.

### **E. Lessons Learned from the Scholarship Component**

The experiences of WI in designing and implementing this major scholarship program can be summarized in the following lessons learned. These lessons were gleaned from the existing documents produced by WI and from the observations and insights of the independent external evaluation team.

1. Existing academic programs designed for traditional students do not serve non-traditional students well. Specially designed programs that focus on mature learners, concentrate coursework to reduce total time and provide support services better meet their needs.
2. Scholarships targeted exclusively for any group will raise concerns, but the goals of the effort must be considered and weighed against other competing goals.
3. Infusing a substantial number of newly upgraded mid-career professionals to any sector should have an immediate and lasting impact. The strategy to quickly create a critical mass of trained and credentialed women professionals in the Bureau of Agriculture and Women's Affairs Offices at the regional and federal levels in Ethiopia is producing substantial attitude change and recognition/respect for women and their potential.
4. Selecting training sites in-country not only reduces costs, but may contribute to retention.
5. On the other hand, international training creates opportunities for developing new networks, information streams and access to critical resources.
6. Newly trained individuals need continuing contact with each other and with stimulating activities to maintain enthusiasm. Ongoing communication channels and peer support/sharing networks can be extremely useful in helping professionals expand their scholarly vision, recognize their potential contributions and rally around critical issues.



*Interviews with WI Training Coordinator, Addis Ababa*

## **Success Story**

### **Awassa College of Agriculture (ACA)**

WI originally wanted to help ACA to sustain the only diploma level training in the home sciences in the country to ensure that development agents with home science training would be available to support women and the introduction of new household technologies and practices in the rural sector. However, due to federal level changes in policy early-on during the project period, it became clear that a bachelor's level program would be needed at ACA. The transformation of the diploma program to a BSc program would require more highly trained staff. Given the financial prospects of the College, the University and the country, this seemed impossible. In fact, the University was considering terminating the program completely. With the possibility of sending existing faculty for further academic training through EMPOWER investments, the University revised its position and began a serious effort to both upgrade the program and to redesign the program to serve broad rural development needs.

The resulting new Department of Rural Development and Family Sciences is a spectacular example of innovation and commitment. The new department and BSc major are unique not only to Ethiopia, but to the world! The curriculum combines a strong agriculture, community development and family focus to prepare both men and women for critical roles in managing rural development investments. It will provide mid-level managers for line ministries and NGOs while contributing to the manpower needs of various training institutions and programs thus inspiring the next generation of development workers. The current class includes 100 students (40% female) and was the most sought after major across the College! In the words of Dean Aszerefegn, *"We believe this program will be good for rural development. These graduates will be good change agents. Not only do we have new faculty capacity, we have new programs to serve the country."*

Interactions with the President of Debub University, the Dean of the College of Agriculture and the Chairman of the new Department confirmed the strong commitment and pride associated with this effort. All of these academic leaders were intimately involved in the transformation of the program and praised the support of WI, who made it possible. They also noted with pride the increase in female enrollments (20%) throughout the University, progress that was strongly supported by having female role models and active support for female student retention that emerged from the WI association. It seems that one of the LFC participants (a faculty member in the department) started a female mentoring program as part of her post-training commitment to change. The experiences of that early program have proved to be important to retaining female students.

As a result of the upgraded credentials of faculty, supported by WI scholarships, the department now boasts of having the only female PhD faculty member in the University! And another scholarship holder sent to the Philippines for her BSc, extended her scholarship to acquire an MSc and now is completing her PhD—progress for women and the academy!